

Brancepeth Parish Newsletter



February 2025

Also online at www.stbrandon.org.uk/newsletter





Item of the month



Model of a B17 locomotive 'Brancepeth Castle'

A Gresley B17 class 4-6-0 locomotive was built at Darlington and entered service in March 1936 and named 'Brancepeth Castle'.

It was given the number 2826 which was later changed in 1946 to 1626, and changed again under British Rail to 61626. It was rebuilt as a B17/6 in April 1955 and was finally scrapped on 11th January 1960.

This is just one of the items which can be seen in the Archive Room in Brancepeth Castle. Open on the first Saturday in every month 9am-1pm.

Parochial Church Council

Priest in Charge	currently in vacancy
Associate Minister	Rev'd. Alison Hobbs (0191 3789670) alison@brancepethcastle.org.uk
Church Wardens:	Mike Higton (0191 5974675) Carol Beeby (0191 3847431), (07592 975002)
Secretary	Colin Waterman (07713637128) colinwaterman069@gmail.com
Treasurer	Vickie Jackson (0191 3783581) djacksonfarming@outlook.com
Deanery Synod	Jane Stout (0191 3860618) Peter Bailey (0781772896)

Other members:-

Janette Foxe (07587 225 200) Kenneth Howe (07710098705, 0191 3840589)
Catrin Morgan (0191 4476520) Sue Morgan (0191 3781172)

Lay Reader	Geoff Moore (07854 696664)
Prayer Team	Alison Hobbs (01913789670), Alison Moore (0191 373 5674).
Sunday School	Martin Peacock (07503242074)
Messy Church	Carole Beeby (0191 3847431), (07592 975002)
Organist	Richard Hird
Village Choir	Martyn Jones (0191 3789297)
Sacristans	Carol Beeby (0191 3847431), Valeria Dietz, Pat Sharples.
Safeguarding Officer	Geoff Moore (07854 696664)
Events coordinator	Janette Foxe events@stbrandon.org.uk .
Flower Guild	Lynne Hastie (0191 3781871)
Churchyard	Edward Staines (0191 3780858)
Youth Club	Geoff Moore (07854 696664) Martin Peacock (07503242074)
Worship Team	Carol Beeby, Janette Foxe, Hester Higton, Rev'd Alison Hobbs, Alison Moore, Geoff Moore, Martin Peacock.
AdminTeam	Carol Beeby, Janette Foxe, Sue Morgan, Gillian Smellie.
PMC Team:	Alison Hobbs (ex officio), Alison Moore, James Morgan, Sue Morgan, Jane Stout, Colin Waterman.
Fabric:	Mike Higton (chair), James Morgan, Rev'd Alison Hobbs, Tom Hobbs, Steve Hodgson, Edward Staines, George Rae.
Website	www.stbrandon.org.uk

Newsletter entries no later than February 18th please.

Please send to Sue Morgan – sueatpeppermires@gmail.com

If you would prefer to receive an electronic copy of this newsletter, please contact Hester Higton on hesterhigton@phoncoop.coop.

Some thoughts from Rev'd Alison Hobbs

Why, I wonder, when we have more 'communication tools' at our disposal than ever in the history of humankind, do we so often make such a bad job of communicating? I have spent several frustrating hours being sent on loops around the HMRC website that insists that it is the quickest way to solve my problem – that the call centre tells me has been updated to now deal with my particular request. Except it hasn't, and when another call centre lady eventually intercepts the repeating message, "Your call is important to us", and "Go to the on-line help centre ...", she is – remarkable! She is human and helpful. She listens, and responds to the particular problem I have, and provides the entire solution. All by herself, in one short phone call. She also tells me she has a broken thumb (from walking the dog, not the ice), that she is feeling worn down by the string of short tempered customers she's had today, and if the website was improved, they'd be less cross, but the website operators don't listen to her. I am happy to discuss these small woes while we pick through the figures and facts of my enquiry, and we both leave the phone call feeling considerably cheered.

I'm not weighing up the need for computers, nor questioning their efficiency but there are times when a good listening to, and human warmth is what makes life better.

I found it interesting that when a survey was conducted several decades ago, and repeated recently, asking businesses to rank the main causes of inefficiency in their operations, communication methods were still cited as one of the top two reasons. Seems like more ways to communicate, and greater speeds has solved nothing. We have created a pressure of information, and an expectation that response times should be ever shorter, such that our 'devices' now all shout "urgent" and compete for our attention with clamouring insistence.

And so, we turn to our friends and family on social media for escape – at its worst, into another plethora of seductive ping pong games of fascinating trivia. At its best, a feeling that those we love are only a short distance away, that we can get a quick question answered, that we can make a photograph illustrate what words would find tricky (the beauty of a landscape or face; the obscure piece of property that someone might have lost ...).

Computers & artificial intelligence can help us but only human warmth can reach our deeper needs and heal us.

Alison Hobbs



this month is on

SUNDAY 9TH FEBRUARY

3 - 5 PM IN CHURCH

Come and join in the fun with

news**games**bible story**songs**tea

SAVE THE NEXT DATE: SUNDAY 9TH MARCH 3 - 5 PM

COME AND JOIN THE FUN!



STORIES FROM THE BIBLE WITH CRAFT ACTIVITIES

ALL WELCOME!

WE GET TOGETHER AFTER THE FIRST HYMN AND
REJOIN THE SERVICE FOR COMMUNION

WE WILL BE MEETING EVERY WEEK UNTIL SUNDAY 6TH APRIL

Brancepeth Youth Club

February - April 2025

The Youth Club is an Open Club run by the Church, and all young people in the Village (and beyond, and their friends) are warmly welcome. The age range is from 11 to 17 years inclusive.

We meet fortnightly in the Village Hall on Sundays 6-8pm, though we may finish earlier when numbers are low. The dates for next term are:

February 9, 23

March 9, 23

April 6

Leaders

Geoff Moore 07854 696664 durmoores@btinternet.com

Martin Peacock 07503 242074

Children attending the Messy Church Christmas Party 2024



A time to remember and a means of remembering

Some time ago, our organist, Richard Hird, agreed to participate in a scheme whereby members of the congregation, and others, might sponsor the organ voluntary which concludes our Sunday worship. In the past, this has included those wishing to mark a birthday, whereas others have chosen to request a specific piece of music; there is no set charge for this and, anyone wishing to participate can contribute in line with their own means. For all of us, there are times when we remember anniversaries which mean a lot to us and this is a way of reliving such a memory.

As a child, I once encountered a beagle and thought him/her the most splendid of creatures, so much so that I resolved that one day I would have one. The years went by and, when our life circumstances permitted, Janette and I journeyed from our then home in Leicester, to the Charterwood Kennels, in Grantham, to meet the puppy known to the Kennel Club as Charterwood Eucalyptus, who would become our Digorie, named after the Elizabethan pirate, Captain Digorie Piper. In March next, I hope to sponsor a voluntary in memory of our dear little hound who was born on 24 March 1995. As I type this, Fenella, our fifth beagle, is snoring away on an armchair she is sharing with Janette; from appearances, I think Fenella is the more comfortable of the two.

In order to sponsor a voluntary, it is unnecessary to own or even desire to own a beagle or any other breed for that matter, all you need is something you wish to remember, which could be absolutely anything. Should you wish to participate, please drop me an email at wilfredfoxe@outlook.com giving some details which can be as vague as you wish. You can even keep what you wish to remember a secret!

Wilfred Foxe

Book Club

In February Nick and Dawn Ellis will host us at 24 Goodwell Lea on Friday 21st at 7.30 p.m. For this we will be reading Tara Westover's astonishing memoir "Educated".

The following meeting will be on March 21st at the home of Audrey & Dick Dumbledon, 19 St Monica Grove, Crossgate Moor, DH1 4AS. We will be reading, 'A Whole Life' by Robert Seethaler. It is a contemplation of 8 decades lived in a remote mountain village in Austria. We begin at 7.30pm.

All welcome Val Gibbons.

Brancepeth Leisure and Allotment Gardeners' Club



The AGM of the BLAG Group will take place on Sunday 16th February at 7.30pm in the committee room of the Village Hall. Agendas and minutes of the previous meeting have been distributed to members.

If you are not a member and would like to discuss possibilities please contact either Sue Morgan (0191 3781172) or Richard Hobbs (richardxhobbs@gmail.com)

At present we have three vacant plots. We have two people on our waiting list. Plots are allocated at the AGM in order of time on the list and individual preference. Anyone interested in adopting the remaining plot is welcome to apply.

Sue Morgan (Chair)

'A House Built On Love and Chocolate'

Monday, 17th February 2.00 pm – Golf Club dining room

Phil Burton from the National Trust will be giving a talk about the well-known firm of chocolate manufacturers, Terry's of York. As usual this will be followed by light refreshments and anyone is welcome. Ladies' Club members £4.50 / visitors £6.50

March 2025.

Instead of a meeting we are arranging a workshop by Karen of 'Glass by Donemark' to produce 2 decorated tea lights for the total cost of £18. If you think you may be at all interested please ring or email (01913780707 / jayell80@btinternet.com NB As this is the first talk of the year Janet will be collecting subs. @ £15 pp and the programme for February to July will be available to anyone who would like to see what is planned for the first half of 2025.

BRANCEPETH GARDEN CLUB

SATURDAY 26 APRIL 2025

The Spring Show followed by the Annual General Meeting will take place on **Saturday 26 April 2025** in the Village Hall. More details will be in the March newsletter and schedules will be available at the Village Coffee Morning and from committee members from 26 March onwards.

FUTURE EVENTS

TALK IN MARCH AND GARDEN VISIT IN MAY

We are hoping to arrange a talk in March and also a visit to Newby Hall Gardens in North Yorkshire in May. The gardens are well worth a visit and the cornus collection is beautiful and should be in full flower in May. Again, more details will be in the March newsletter.

In order to offer these events, the committee does need the support of its members to keep the Club going. We have asked members in the recent past to suggest garden-related topics they would like to hear about or gardens they would like to visit but unfortunately we haven't received any suggestions. If you do have any suggestions then please let me, or any committee member know.

Finally, membership subscriptions are now due. If there is anyone who has recently moved to Brancepeth or anyone already in the village who would like to join the Garden Club, then you can put £3.00 in an envelope with your name and contact details on the front and post in the postbox outside the Village Hall or you can pay by bank transfer, details below. Please make sure that you put your name on as a reference for our Treasurer.

Brancepeth Garden Club

Co-op Bank **Sort Code:** **08 92 99** **Account No. 67318094**

Bonny Bainbridge,

Garden Club Secretary.

E mail: alisonbainbridge53@gmail.com

PARISH COUNCIL NEWS - Updates since the last Parish Council Meeting

New member: The PC is delighted to welcome its newest member. Councillor Julie Daneshyar was co-opted onto the council at our meeting on the 20th of January. After living in Spennymoor for most of her life, Julie moved to Stockley Grove in 2017. Some of you will know her from her participation in activities such as yoga and the community choir.

Mobile phone survey: As a reminder, we are attempting to gauge any problems you may have in getting a phone signal and in accessing the Internet. We have re-printed the link to the questionnaire here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/XGGTHWX> (It takes less than 5 minutes!)

This is also available on the PC's website. Alternatively, you will find a QR code below. We further plan to highlight the survey at various community group meetings in the coming weeks.



FACT: You can raise policing-related issues (e.g. Neighbourhood Watch and security advice) with our local force via the 'Police & Communities Together' initiative. Officers attend BCA coffee mornings every month. For dates, see the Committee Room and PC noticeboards: the next slot is 5th Feb.

Next PC Meeting: Monday 17th February 2025 at 7:30 pm in the Village Hall.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Sunday 30th March

Mothersing Sunday with posies and children's activities.
We will be collecting gifts of toiletries which ww will take to the
Durham Women's Refuge.

Sunday 18th May

Annual Parochial Church Meeting after morning service at 11.30am
Come and join us!

Men's Social
Village Hall
7pm
Friday February 21st
Fish Supper
Pay as you eat and drink
£3 admission for hall hire.
Domino and Snooker games
Contact David Jackson
07711 648752

Happy 80th Birthday to Janiece Spence

Friends and family joined Janiece and Paul to celebrate this special birthday.



St Brandon's February 2025 – Services and readings

Sunday services are at 10:15am every week.

*If you are unable to join in person, you are welcome to join online for those services which are livestreamed (shown by * below), or to view the recording later, at <https://www.facebook.com/StBrandons>*

*Sun 2nd February	Presentation of Christ in the Temple	Parish Eucharist	
	First	Sue Morgan	Malachi 3: 1-5
	Gospel	Edward Staines	Luke 2: 22-40
	Psalm		24: [1-6], 7-end
Intercessions		Colin Waterman	
Sun 9th February	4th Sunday before Lent	Morning Worship	
Readings	First	Mike Higton	1 Cor 15: 1-11
	Gospel	Wilfred Foxe	Luke 5: 1-11
	Psalm		138
Intercessions		Geoff Moore	
*Sun 16th February	3rd Sunday before Lent	Parish Eucharist	
Readings	First	Tom Hobbs	1 Cor 15: 12-20
	Gospel	James Morgan	Luke 6: 17-26

	Psalm		1
Intercessions		Alison Moore	
Sun 23rd February	2nd Sunday before Lent	Parish Eucharist	
Readings	First	Janette Foxe	Rev 4
	Gospel	Kenneth Howe	Luke 8: 22-25
	Psalm		65
Intercessions		Wilfred Foxe	
Sun 2nd March	Sunday next before Lent	Parish Eucharist	
Readings	First	Carys Funnell	2 Cor 3: 12 - 4: 2
	Gospel	Steve Hodgson	Luke 9: 28-36 [37-43a]
	Psalm		99
Intercessions			

Sidespersons

Feb 2nd Hanna Pokhylko & Vira Melenets
Feb 9th Josie Armstrong & Jean Hodgson
Feb 16th Jane Stout & Pauline Walker
Feb 23rd Diane & Gordon Cassap & Sue Morgan
Mar 2nd Bonny Bainbridge & Peter Bailey

Flowers

Christine Dodd
Jean Hodgson
Diane Coles
Anne Elliott
Lynne Hastie

Coffee

Feb 2nd Jane Stout
Feb 9th Alison Moore
Feb 16th Catrin Morgan
Feb 23rd Geraldine Jennings
Mar 2nd Annette Johnson

Tech Team

Alison & Geoff
Peter

Church Cleaning

February - Team A

Alison Moore, Anne Elliott, Pat Sharples, Jane Stout

March – Team B

Sue Morgan, Hillary Moss, Annette Johnson, Diane Cassap

NEW YEAR CHEESE AND CHAT raised £170, half of which has gone to the Children's Society, and half to Ripple Effect (resourcing and skilling African farmers). Thank you to all who came, and for the lively conversations.

Vestry Report, November/December 2024

CELEBRATION OF LIFE	6th November 2024	Kathleen Margaret Joan Currie
INTERMENT OF ASHES	6th November 2024	Kathleen Margaret Joan Currie
INTERMENT OF ASHES	6th November 2024	William Alan Currie
BAPTISM	15th December 2024	Edward William Luke

If you would welcome a short time of Christian worship with friends and neighbours, we would love to see you.

You are invited to join us for a small and friendly 'home Eucharist service' in the Castle Chapel.

Tuesday 4th & 18th February 2025 at 11:00
Tuesday 4th & 18th January 2025 at 11:00



For more information, please email alison@brancepethcastle.org.uk
Rev Alison, St Brandon's Church

Prayer Space February 2025

'This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us' (1 John 4:10)

Whatever we think of ourselves or God, we cannot stop God from loving us. Can we embrace that love and let it enlarge our hearts towards others?

Prayer theme: Love thrives on love. Love is the greatest enabler and transformer. Luxuriate, relax and bask in the knowledge of that love in which you are held, let it fill you and let it flow into your prayers and actions.

Prayer focus:

- The lonely and housebound, those far from home and loved ones.
- Those in difficult relationships, in marriage, in families, situations of betrayal, abuse and loss.
- For friends, carers, counsellors and all who listen and look to foster loving relationships.

Village carol-singing

Many thanks to all who gave their time, voices, money and hospitality towards the annual tour of the village. With the donations received, we have been able to give £300 to the Salvation Army in Langley Moor, and to make £300-worth of grants under the Lend With Care climate-positive scheme, contributing towards efficient cooking stoves for 20 households: 10 in India and 10 in Rwanda.

In India, the recipients are women in the Kandhamal and Kalahandi districts of Odisha state, in the east of the subcontinent. They are all subsistence farmers or agricultural day labourers, and currently use traditional mud stoves (chullas) for cooking, which consume a relatively large amount of firewood and produce a lot of smoke. The improved stoves use only half the amount of wood (or less), so their owners will need to spend less time gathering fuel, will benefit their health with cleaner air, and will reduce the rate of local deforestation. Lend With Care's partner organisation in India will train the women how to use the stoves they supply, and will make annual follow-up checks on a large representative sample.

In Rwanda the partner organisation is assisting people who currently cook on charcoal to purchase an advanced biomass cookstove: each grant will subsidise over 50% of the cost of a pellet gasifier stove. Pellet cooking is very clean and almost smoke-free, comparable to LPG, and uses around 85% less wood to generate the same cooking energy compared with charcoal. The biomass used comes from forestry waste. The lifespan of a stove is expected to be around 4-5 years and our partner in Rwanda will provide free of charge maintenance over the first 3 years. Pellets as cooking fuel are around 30% cheaper than charcoal in Kigali today and the owner of one of these stoves will save money from day one of using it, in addition to improving their respiratory health, and reducing the rampant deforestation in Rwanda. Most of the ten people we have supported are teachers in Kigali.



Abhila



Satyabhama



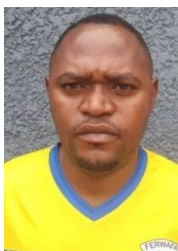
Ranjita



Debaki



Claude



Michel



Thierve



Alfred

Here are some of the recipients from each scheme



Wednesday Coffee Morning

10:30-11:30am

Village Hall

5 th Feb	Margot & Vivienne or Janiece
12 th Feb	Rosemary & James
19 th Feb	Vivienne & Val
26 th Feb	Martyn & Christine

*(Please contact Martyn or Christine - 0191 378 9297 –
If you need to swap your rota date. Thank you)*

Newsletter Advertising Costs

A limited range of advertising is made available in the newsletter. Charges for advertising were last reviewed in 2021 and the PCC has approved a small increase to cover increased costs.

Local and Charity Rates

Full page colour	£18.50
Half page colour	£12.50
Full page Black & White	£12.50
Half page Black & White	£7.50

Commercial Rates

£37.50
£25
£25
£15

Groups that regularly use the newsletter as a means to advertise events, but do not offer a regular donation, are asked to consider making a contribution to printing costs bearing these figures in mind.

Thank you.

Dates for the Diary:-

Feb Mondays - Snooker, 7.30pm, Village Hall
Feb Mondays - Yoga, 7.30pm, Village Hall
Feb Monday - Knit and Natter, 6th Jan, Village Hall, 2-4pm.
Feb Tuesdays - Art Group, 7.00 – 9.00pm, Village Hall
Feb Wednesdays - Tai Chi 9.30 -10.30, Village Hall
Feb Wednesdays - Coffee Mornings in the Village Hall, 10.30-11.30am
Feb Thursdays - Indoor Bowls, 10.00-12.00, Village Hall
Feb Thursdays - Badminton, 7.30pm, Village Hall
Feb Sundays - Capoeira Classes, 10.00 – 11.30am, Village Hall
Feb Sundays - Youth Club, 9th & 23rd 6.00pm -8.00pm, Village Hall
1st Saturday each month - Archive Room in Castle open between 9.00am – 1.00pm

Jan 20th Mon Parish Council, 7.30pm, Village Hall
Feb 3rd Mon Extraordinary Meeting of Parochial Church Council,
7.30pm, No 1 The Village
Feb 9th Sun Messy Church, 3.00pm -5.00pm
Feb 16th Sun AGM, Allotment and Leisure Gardeners Club, 7.30pm
Village Hall
Feb 17th Mon Ladies Group, 2.00pm, Golf Club
Feb 21st Fri Men's Social, 7.00pm, Village Hall
Feb 21st Fri Book Club, 7.30am, 24 Goodwell Lea
Mar 17th Mon Parochial Church Council, 7.30pm

Photos

Front cover – ©- Sue Morgan. Churchyard heathers and early daffodils outside the Village Hall

Inside front cover – ©- Archives and History Group, item from the collection

Inside back cover – ©- Dean Maynard, Brancepeth Golf Club Advertisement

Back cover – ©-Bob Ruskin, Goodwell Lea fund raising for the Salvation Army.

Newsletter entries no later than February 18th please.

Please send to Sue Morgan at sueatpeppermires@gmail.com

View newsletter on line at www.stbrandon.org.uk/newsletter

You can also join us on our Facebook Page (<https://www.facebook.com/StBrandon>)

Brancepeth Community Association - Management Committee

Martyn Jones	<i>Chairman</i>	Val Gibbons	<i>Subscriptions</i>
	<i>Vice chairman</i>	Geraldine Jennings	<i>Garden Club</i>
Jo Dalton	<i>Secretary, Website</i>	Jean Merrington	
	<i>& Bookings</i>	Josie Armstrong	<i>Social Secretary</i>
Ian Stoker	<i>Treasurer</i>		<i>Church Representative</i>

<http://brancepethcommunityassociation.btck.co.uk/> Tel: 0191 3783952

Parish Activities

Chairman B.C.A.	Martyn Jones, 32 Goodwell Lea (0191 3789297)
Secretary	Jo Dalton, 1 Rectory Cottages (07876 624626)
Treasurer	Ian Stoker, Castle Lodge (0191 378 2818.)
Social Secretary	Josie Armstrong, jo.arm@me.com / 07882 233118
Membership	Val Gibbons, 3 The Forge (0191 3784200)
Hall Bookings	Jo Dalton, 1 Rectory Cottages (07876 624626)
Archives & History	Vivienne Lowe, 17 The Village (0191 3780974)
Art Group	Jeanette Metcalfe, (0191 3781646)
Badminton	Sue Morgan, (0191 3781172)
Brancepeth Allotment & Leisure Gardeners' Club	Sue Morgan & Richard Hobbs baacommittee3@gmail.com
Book Club	Val Gibbons (0191 3784200)
Drama	Martin Peacock (07503242074)
Flower Guild	Jessie Brown (0191 3782748)
Garden Club	Edward Staines (0191 3780858) or Secretary, Bonny Bainbridge, (0191 3789304)
Snooker Bookings	Jo Dalton, 1 Rectory Cottages (07876 624626)
Wednesday Coffee	Christine Jones (0191 3789297)
Yoga	Lynne Hastie (0191 3781871)
Youth Club	Geoff Moore (0191 3735674)

Parish Council

Thomas Hobbs, Chair: email: tom.rhobbs@hotmail.co.uk

Nick Ellis - Vice chair; tel: 0191 380 3047; email: n.t.ellis@durham.ac.uk

Hassall Balshen – tel: 0191 3781295; email: hassall.balshen@gmail.com

Michael Stephenson, email: stephenson15@me.com

Philip Davison, email: philipdavison000@btinternet.com

Catherine Stevenson: catherine@jamsey.net

Parish Clerk Kirsty Charlton clerk@brancepeth-parish-council.org.uk

County Councillors: olwyn.gunn@durham.gov.uk

fraser.tinsley@durham.gov.uk

www.brancepeth-parish-council.org.uk



BRANCEPETH CASTLE
— GOLF CLUB —

MOTHER'S DAY LUNCH

Sunday 30th March
12pm - 4pm

2 Courses £14.95*

3 Courses £19.95*



Booking advised.

*Full menu at the clubhouse bar

Helping 'The Salvation Army Christmas Appeal' in Goodwell Lea



It has become an annual event here in Goodwell Lea North that, in the run up to Xmas, we all install blow up and illuminated Xmas themed decorations in our front gardens. On the agreed "Light up" day we gather in the evening and, with invited friends and neighbours, switch on and enjoy Robin's home-made soup and other seasonal food, all self-provided. At the same time we collect donations from everybody attending in aid of The Salvation Army Christmas Appeal. This year we surpassed last year's total of £130 by collecting over £180 (when tax relief is added from on-line donations). I attach a photograph of Robin Wills passing the proceeds over to Salvation Army officials Ali Brooks and Stef Quinn.

Bob Ruskin